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Human Rights Council

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S-17/...Grave human rights violations in the Syrian Arab Republic

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006,

Recalling Human Rights Council resolution S-16/1 of 29 April 2011, in which the Council requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to urgently dispatch a mission to the Syrian Arab Republic to investigate all alleged violations of international human rights law,

Recalling also Presidential statement of the Security Council of 3 August 2011, in which the Council expressed its grave concern at the deteriorating situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, condemned the widespread violations of human rights and the use of force against civilians by the Syrian authorities, and called on the Syrian authorities to alleviate the humanitarian situation in crisis areas by ceasing the use of force against affected towns, to allow expeditious and unhindered access for international humanitarian agencies and workers, and to cooperate fully with the Office of the High Commissioner,

Welcoming the recent briefing of the High Commissioner to the Security Council on the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic,

Welcoming also the recent statements of the Secretary-General calling upon the Syrian authorities to immediately cease all violence against their people and to fully respect human rights,

Supporting the recent statements of the High Commissioner and the statement made by the Human Rights Council special procedures mandate holders on the human rights violations in the Syrian Arab Republic,

Expressing deep concern following the statement issued by the special advisers to the Secretary-General on the prevention of genocide and on the responsibility to protect, who considered that the scale and gravity of the violations indicate a serious possibility that crimes against humanity may have been committed and continue to be committed in the Syrian Arab Republic,

Bearing in mind the recent statements of the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Arab League, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the European Union and other regional organizations expressing their concern over the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic,

Bearing in mind also the diplomatic demarches of several countries, including neighbouring countries,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the fact-finding mission dispatched by the Office of the High Commissioner¹ pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution S-16/1 of 29 April 2011, expresses its profound concern at the findings of the mission and decides to transmit the report to the Security Council;

2. *Strongly condemns* the continued grave human rights violations by the Syrian authorities, including arbitrary executions, excessive use of force and lethal violence against peaceful protesters, enforced and involuntary disappearances, arbitrary detention, torture and systematic persecution and intimidation of peaceful protesters, human rights defenders and journalists;

3. *Deplores* the continued indiscriminate attacks on the Syrian population, and calls upon the Syrian authorities to cease immediately all acts of violence against its population;

4. *Reiterates its call* upon the Syrian authorities to put an end immediately to all human rights violations and acts of violence, to protect their population and to comply fully with their obligations under international law;

5. *Reiterates its call* upon the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to release immediately all prisoners of conscience and arbitrarily detained persons, and to cease immediately any intimidation, persecution and arbitrary arrest of individuals, including lawyers, human rights defenders and journalists;

6. *Urges* the Syrian authorities to ensure timely, safe and unhindered access by and for all humanitarian actors, and to ensure the safe passage of humanitarian and medical supplies into the country;

7. *Also urges* the Syrian authorities to allow independent and international media to operate in the Syrian Arab Republic without undue restrictions, to allow access to the Internet and telecommunications networks, and to lift censorship on reporting;

8. *Further urges* the Syrian authorities to allow for an inclusive, credible and genuine national dialogue conducted in an environment without fear and intimidation, aimed at effectively addressing the legitimate aspirations and concerns of the Syrian population and at the promotion and protection of their human rights;

9. *Stresses* the need for an international, transparent, independent and prompt investigation into alleged violations of international law, including actions that may constitute crimes against humanity, and to hold those responsible to account;

10. *Reinforces* the call upon the Syrian authorities to cooperate fully with the Office of the High Commissioner and Human Rights Council mechanisms, and expresses its deep regret over the lack of such cooperation by the Syrian authorities;

11. *Encourages* relevant thematic special procedures mandate holders, within their respective mandates, to continue to pay particular attention to the human rights

¹ A/HRC/18/53.

situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, and urges the Syrian authorities to cooperate with those mandate holders, including by allowing country visits;

12. *Decides* to dispatch urgently an independent international commission of inquiry, to be appointed by the President of the Human Rights Council, to investigate violations of international human rights law in the Syrian Arab Republic since July 2011, to establish the facts and circumstances that may amount to such violations and, where possible, to identify those responsible with a view of ensuring that perpetrators of violations are held accountable;

13. *Requests* the above-mentioned commission of inquiry to report as soon as possible to the Human Rights Council and, in any case, before end November 2011, and recommends that its findings be transmitted to the Secretary-General and relevant United Nations bodies;

14. *Calls upon* the Syrian authorities and other relevant states to cooperate fully with the commission of inquiry;

15. *Requests* the High Commissioner to provide the full administrative, technical and logistical support needed to enable the commission of inquiry to carry out its mandate;

16. *Reiterates* its request to the High Commissioner to present, in an interactive dialogue at the eighteenth session of the Human Rights Council, an oral update on her recent findings regarding the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic;

17. *Requests* the High Commissioner and the President of the Human Rights Council to report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Council at its nineteenth session;

18. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.
